

[PDF] Blueberry Girl

Charles Vess, Neil Gaiman - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Blueberry Girl
Author: Charles Vess, Neil Gaiman
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly In a magical blessing for unconventional girls, Gaiman (*The Graveyard Book*) addresses the ladies of light and ladies of darkness and ladies of never-you-mind, asking them to shelter and guide an infant girl as she grows. Help her to help herself,/ help her to stand,/ help her to lose and to find./ Teach her we're only as big as our dreams./ Show her that fortune is blind. Sinuous, rococo lines—the flowing hair, drooping boughs, winding paths that inspired the pre-Raphaelites—spread their tendrils throughout Vess's (*The Ladies of Grace Adieu*) full-bleed spreads, potent mixtures of the charms of Arthur Rackham, Maxfield Parrish and Cecily Barker's flower fairies. An Art Nouveau-ish font in a blueberry color compounds the sense of fantasy. On each page a different girl—short, tall, white, brown, younger, older—runs or jumps or swims, accompanied by animals meant to guard and protect her. Fans of Gaiman and Vess will pounce on this creation; so too will readers who seek for their daughters affirmation that sidesteps traditional spiritual conventions. All ages. (Mar.)

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From School Library Journal PreS Up—Gaiman and Vess worked together on *Stardust* (HarperCollins, 2000), the award-winning fantasy that became a film in 2007. One can count on them for a fresh approach to the conventions of a genre. This New Age "prayer" for a yet-to-be-born child is no exception, although the combination of a picture-book format with concepts that require adult understanding may cause confusion or boredom in youngsters ("Keep her from.../Nightmares at three or bad husbands at thirty,/... Dull days at forty, false friends at fifteen-"). Visually, the book also struggles with a split personality. One scene, in which animals peer at a girl in jeans and dreadlocks, is rendered in watercolor, defined by clean outlines, for a contemporary, realistic look. Another view of naked babies sleeping in flower petals is created with a hazy focus, calling to mind Jessie Willcox Smith or Elsa Beskow's *Peter in Blueberry Land* (Floris, 1988). The dedication indicates that this poem was written for a pregnant friend; it seeks to ward off all sorts of fairy-tale trouble: "Ladies of light and ladies of darkness and ladies of never-you-mind.... Keep her from spindles and sleeps at sixteen/Let her stay waking and wise." The "ladies" are draped in clouds and cloaks, sunsets and rainbows. The racial characteristics, hair color, and age of the girl change from page to page, presumably for an "everygirl" effect. This may resonate with people purchasing baby presents, as Seuss's *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* (Random, 1990) strikes a chord at graduation. The card, however, should read "Mother."—Wendy Lukehart, *Washington DC Public Library*

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